Sl. No.	State/ Union Territory	Districts parts of which showing declining trends (more than 20 cm per year)
17.	Rajasthan	Ajmer, Alwar, Banswara, Baran, Barmer, Bharatpur, Bhilwara, Bikaner, Bundi, Chittorgarh, Churu, Oausa, Dholpur, Dungarpur, Hanumangarh, Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Jalore, Jhalwar, Jhunjhunu, Jodhpur, Karauli, Kota, Nagaur, Pali, Rajsamand, Sawaimadhopur, Sikar, Sirohi, Tonk, Udaipur
18.	Tamil Nadu	Chennai, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Erode, Kancheepuram, Kanyakumari, Karaikal, Karur, Madurai, Namakkal, Nilgiri, Perambalur, Ramanathapuram, Salem, Sivaganga, Thanjavur, Theni, Tirchirappalli, Tirunelveli, Thiruvallur, Tiruvannamalai, Tuticorin, Vellore, Vellupuram, Wudhanagar
19.	Uttar Pradesh	Agra, Aligarh, Allahabad, Auraiya, Azamgarh, Badaun, Baghpat, Ballia, Bijnor, Chandauli, Chitrakoot, Oeoria, Etawah, Fetehpur, Gautam Budh Nagar, Ghaziabad, Gonda, Hamirpur, Hathras, Jalaun, Jhansi, Kanpur Dehat, Kanpur Nagar, Lakhimpur Kheri, Lalitpur, Lucknow, Mahoba, Mathura, Meerut, Mirzapur, Pratapgarh, Saharanpur, Sitapur, Sultanpur, Unnao
20.	Uttaranchal	Dehradun, Haridwar
21.	West Bengal	Bankura, Bardhaman, Birbhum, Howrah, Hugli, East Medinipur, Malda, Murshidabad, Puruliya, South Twenty four Parganas, West Medinipur
22.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Dadra & Nagar Haveli
23.	Pondicherry	Pondicherry

Levy of tax on salt

†*448. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE **be** pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that imposition of 4 per cent tax on salt has created a crisis for over 25 lakhs of farmers and labourers engaged in production of salt;

†Ortginal notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether Government are considering or propose to remove tax on salt by amending the salt policy;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government would also consider taking any steps for betterment of farmers and labourers engaged in production of salt; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and by when these steps will be taken?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (e) VAT is a tax intended to replace the State Sales Tax. Hence, the Central Government has no role to play either in imposing VAT on any particular item or exempting any item from VAT An Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers was set up to decide on all issues relating to implementation of State level VAT.

The Empowered Committee of State Finance Minister has decided that while unprocessed and unbranded salt shall be exempt from VAT, processed and branded salt shall attract 4% rate of VAT. Thus, 4% rate of VAT shall be applicabe only on sale of processed and branded salt, which is generally manufactured in the organized sector. Hence, there would be no adverse impact on farmers and labourers engaged in production of salt.

Measures taken by the CGWB to create awareness on water conservation

*449. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has a scheme to create awareness amongst rural people about the need to conserve ground water resources;

(b) what was the method used by the Central Ground Water Board to create such awareness;

(c) whether it is a fact that the CGWB collaborated with universities to hold camps and seminars on this subject;

(d) the details of work done by the Board in this regard;

(e) whether it is also a fact that this work has been stopped; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?